

REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated June 2, 2006, having a shortened statutory period for response set to expire on September 2, 2006. Please reconsider the claims pending in the application for reasons discussed below.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner rejected claims 24, 90, and 99 as being anticipated by British Patent No. 777,901. In response, Applicants have amended claims 90 and 99. Further, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claim 24.

Claim 24 includes the limitation of back thread flanks of the threaded male and female portions being disposed at an acute angle with respect to respective main thread axes such that the respective thread portions are angled away from an adjacent end of the respective tubing section. British Patent No. 777,901 does not disclose that the back thread flanks of the threaded male and female portions are disposed at an acute angle (an angle of less than 90°) with respect to the respective main thread axes. In contrast, as shown in Figures 2-3 of British Patent No. 777,901, the back thread flanks of the threaded male and female portions are disposed at a 90° angle with respect to the respective main thread axes. Applicants respectfully point out that due to the tapered thread arrangement disclosed in British Patent No. 777,901, the main thread axis is different from the longitudinal axis of the tubing connection.

As amended, claim 90 includes the limitation that the lead thread flanks of the threaded male portion are disposed at an angle different from that of the lead thread flanks of the threaded female portion, wherein the lead thread flanks of the threaded male and female portions are rectilinear. British Patent No. 777,901 does not disclose that the lead flanks of the threaded male and female portions are disposed at different angles and that the lead thread flanks are rectilinear (straight). In contrast, as set forth on pg. 2, lines 112-115 of British Patent No. 777,901, the lead flank "7" are shaped as a convex curve rather than straight as recited in claim 90. Therefore, British Patent No. 777,901 fails to disclose all of the limitations of claim 90.

As amended, claim 99 includes the limitation that the back thread flanks on the threaded male and female portions are configured to ensure the tubing connection

remains engaged as the tubing connection moves from a first diameter prior to expansion to a second larger diameter after expansion. British Patent No. 777,901 does not disclose that the back thread flanks are configured to ensure the tubing connection remains engaged as the tubing connection moves from a first diameter prior to expansion to a second larger diameter after expansion. In fact, British Patent No. 777,901 teaches away from expanding the connection disclosed in British Patent No. 777,901 by specifically stating that the expanding forces are minimized. (See British Patent No. 777,901, pg. 2, lines 43-45). As a result, British Patent No. 777,901 does not teach all the limitations recited in claim 99.

As the foregoing illustrates, British Patent No. 777,901 fails to teach or disclose all the limitations of claims 24, 90 and 99. This failure precludes British Patent No. 777,901 from anticipating claims 24, 90, and 99. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the 102(b) rejection of claims 24, 90, and 99 be removed and the allowance of the same. Additionally, claim 25 depends from claim 24, claims 91-92 and 94 depend from claim 90 and claim 100 depends from claim 99 and these claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as claims 24, 90 and 99.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 26, 93, and 98 as being obvious over British Patent No. 777,901. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. Claim 26 depends from claim 24 and claims 93 and 98 depend from claim 90. As set forth above, British Patent No. 777,901 fails to disclose all the limitations of claims 24 and 90. Therefore, claims 26, 93, and 98 are allowable for at least the same reasons as claims 24 and 90.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner indicated that claims 85-89 are allowed. Applicants appreciate allowance of these claims.

The Examiner objected to claims 95-97 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, Applicants have rewritten claims 95-97 as new claims 101-103. Applicants believe that new claims 101-

103 are in condition for allowance and respectfully request the same. Additionally, new claims 104-116 depend from allowable claim 101 and these claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 101.

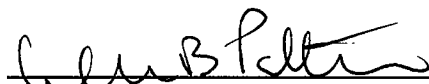
New Claims

Claims 117-122 have been added to claim aspects of the present invention. Applicants submit that no new matter has been added. Claims 117-119 depend from claim 24 and claim 120 depends from claim 99 and these claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as claims 24 and 99. Additionally, Applicants believe the references cited by the Examiner does not teach the limitation of providing a second expandable tubing section defining a female threaded portion having respective lead and back thread flanks, the lead thread flanks of the threaded male portion disposed at an angle different from that of the lead thread flanks of the threaded female portion, wherein the lead thread flanks of the threaded male and female portions are rectilinear as recited in claims 121-122. Therefore, Applicants believe that new claims 117-122 are in condition for allowance and respectfully request allowance of these claims.

Conclusion

Having addressed all issues set out in the office action, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request that the claims be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,



William B. Patterson
Registration No. 34,102
PATTERSON & SHERIDAN, L.L.P.
3040 Post Oak Blvd. Suite 1500
Houston, TX 77056
Telephone: (713) 623-4844
Facsimile: (713) 623-4846
Attorney for Applicants